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## The Decorator and Furnisher.

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### PRIZE COMPETITION IN INTERIOR DECORATION.

MESSRS. JOSEPH P. McHUGH & CO., Interior Architects and Decorators, New York, with the view of encouraging the study of interior decoration after pure styles, offer six subjects for competition in THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, beginning with the October, 1890, issue, which also commences the seventeenth volume of our journal. A prize of TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS will be paid by the above firm, every alternate month during the year, for the best original design in the following special styles of ornamental construction and decorative treatment:

#### LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR COMPETITION.

October, 1890,	-	A COLONIAL RECEPTION ROOM.
December, "	-	AN ITALIAN RENAISSANCE DINING ROOM.
February, 1891,	-	A LOUIS SEIZE DRAWING ROOM.
April,	-	A ROMANESQUE HALL.
June,	-	AN ADAMS LIBRARY.
August,	-	A LOUIS QUINZE BOUDOIR.

#### CONDITIONS.

1.—Each competitive design must be 15 inches by 10 in size. The drawing must be executed by the pen in black ink, and sent us flat, not rolled up.

2.—Each drawing must be original, and should include suggestions for wall decoration, draperies and furniture, after the style of its period, but adapted to modern construction and requirements.

3.—Each drawing must be signed with a *nom de plume*, and accompanied by a letter giving the real name and address of the designer. All designs must be addressed to the Editor of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, 150 Nassau Street, New York, and must reach the office not later than the 1st of the month previous to that for which the competition is announced; thus, drawings for the October competition should reach the Editor not later than the 1st of September.

4.—A committee of decorative artists (whose names will be announced hereafter) will decide as to which design is entitled to the prize in each competition, as well as those entitled to honorable mention, and their decision will be final.

5.—The editor is to have the right of publishing any of the drawings sent in, whether awarded the prize or not.



## THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

WE present our readers in the present issue of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER with several illustrations of the Pompeia, at Saratoga, N. Y., being a reproduction of the House of Pansa, in Pompeii, which was buried by Vesuvius in the year A. D. 79. This classical and romantic undertaking has been magnificently carried out by Mr. Franklin W. Smith, who has not only reproduced the typical construction and proportions of a Pompeian Villa, but has also realistically furnished the building with models of the actual furniture, tables, chairs, couches, musical instruments tripods, lamps, candelabra, manuscripts, busts, coins; also kitchen utensils, amphoræ, platters, dishes, bells, as well as models of bread as found calcined, and every conceivable object necessary to house furnishing among the Romans. It is the idea of an enthusiast, a lover of the antique, and a broad minded citizen of the republic, possessed with sufficient means to carry out his ideas. It is a poetical idea, fraught with great practical lessons to the age and the country in which the Villa exists. Americans, most of all, require to be taught the value of repose, and the health giving charm of stately surroundings. The individual in this country is withering, shriveling, drying up, and in too many instances is on the high road to the mad house. This is the product of his insane rush for wealth, which causes an astounding self neglect, which produces a total disregard of anything that can dignify the man himself. We require the decorated walls and splendid columns of the Pompeian household to teach the lesson of *otium cum dignitate*. The successful American must call a halt to his self destruction, and begin to beautify himself. A too exclusive attention to business destroys nerves and body and withers all appreciation of the beautiful. The household appointments reproduced in the Pompeia are executed with an artistic grace, showing that the ancients possessed ideas of the greatest elegance. Their mode of life was admirable enough to inspire a United States citizen to reproduce in all its exactitude one of their typical villas 2,000 years after its erection, on American soil, at a distance of 4,000 miles from the site of its prototype.

THE exhibition of furniture that is being made at the Edinburgh Exhibition is certainly calculated to improve the public taste in the matter of interior appointments, and will prove, to the people of Great Britain at least, that their home manufacturers are no less ingenious and artistic in their work than the foreign manufacturers. At the present moment both England and the United States are importing large quantities of Louis Quinze furniture, the late Paris Exhibition having set the fashion for a revival of that exquisite style of work. It is well to see the people of Great Britain setting up an exhibition of their own, showing that English firms are not afraid to meet their rivals in a fresh International competition. We will give illustrations in the August issue of furniture exhibited by Messrs. Cranston & Elliot, Clapperton & Co., and George Dobie & Sons, all of Edinburgh. We will also show a sideboard exhibited by Mr. M. Pollock, of Beith, and a Gothic chimney piece by the Cavendish House Co., of Cheltenham.

A SINGULAR order sent from England to Shanghai, China, has just been carried out, namely, two carved teak dados, one for a dining hall, the other for a drawing room, the panels representing various scenes from Chinese history. They are described as remarkable examples of what the Chinese artificer can accomplish under foreign supervision. As decoration of a pictorial character should display more than mere ingenuity, and for mural adornment be at least intelligible, we may consider the order as some Englishman's freak, aiming at something like originality of effect. Teak is the hardest of woods, quickly dulls the best tempered steel instruments, and, though susceptible of a high polish, has never been known to be employed for wall panels in Europe or in this country. The general aspect of the panels in question may readily be judged from what we know of Chinese carvings. It has not been unusual for French and English textile dealers to send out designs to India for execution, but the instance we cite for the production of carved woodwork is certainly novel. It appears that each dado occupied a period of eight months for its execution. The length of each is 34x27 feet; the height is not given.

A NOVEL mode has been found of utilizing for the decoration of certain pieces of furniture the productions of that charming French painter of the time of Louis XIV., Watteau—productions which he chiefly painted on the panels of wainscotted walls and of furniture, from which they have been long cut out, being held as treasures in the public and private galleries of Europe. Watteau was, in fact, a house decorator, and the suitability of his productions for the beautifying and enlivening of apartments still remains. His rural paintings are essentially gay, with delightful scenic effects, his groups of figures being rendered with

exceeding taste, given the most graceful and living movements and dressed in the richest and brightest colors, united in perfect harmony. We had lately occasion to admire the effect of the water color productions of three of his paintings on cardboard and glazed, set in the back of the canopied recess of a cabinet immediately above the central shelf, another set of same filling the panels at the back of a mahogany sideboard, the woods of which were lightened up, presenting most attractive tapestry. Such an application of these might readily be extended. With the growing taste for the pictorial treatment of interior walls, we should not be surprised to find hereafter eminent artists of the easel emerging from their studios to delineate on these some of Watteau's groups. The effect would certainly be much finer than the same scenes hung about on a reduced scale in framed canvas in oil. The gay, glittering personages from the pencil of Watteau are dancing on the green turf or listening to music under broad trees, and mimic cascades whose waters are thrown up in sparkles over drooping branches or are conversing listlessly as they walk through green alleys; they are imaginary nymphs and swains; he depicts pastoral and rural life, led by those opposites of rural simplicity, of society people, all with an easy air and that familiar species of gracefulness which we call genteel. His nymphs have none of the forbidding majesty of goddesses. No dullness overshadows his pastimes; age stands aloof from his revels, life with him is one eternal round of pleasure—a *bal masque*—under green arbors and beneath everlasting sunshine.

WE all of us expect that the World's Fair in Chicago, which is to be held in 1892, or as soon afterwards as such an undertaking can be established (Chicago having no sentiment as to date) will fully represent the industrial and art progress of which has been made by the United States up to the present time. In the interest, however, of hundreds of thousands of Eastern people, who cannot visit the World's Fair in Chicago, we suggest that a metropolitan industrial exhibition should be held in New York City, in commemoration of the quadri-centenary of the discovery of America. If it be thought that such an undertaking would prove to much of a rival to the Chicago World's Fair, why not limit the exhibition to art furnishing materials, such as art furniture, upholstery and drapery fabrics, mural decorations, stained glass, wall papers, carpets and floor coverings, mosaics, hardware furnishings, pottery, glassware, etc., all matters in which there is by far the greatest development in the East. We can safely leave to Chicago, the erection of wooden pyramids to exhibit material progress in horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, lumber, tobacco, cotton, cereals and minerals, while the Eastern exhibition would embrace the industrial arts. An exhibition of this kind held in New York, would be more likely to induce foreign exhibitors to put their art goods in competition with those of American manufacture, the result of which would certainly stimulate American designers to greater artistic efforts in all kinds of household fabrics, and ripen the public taste for the finest class of furnishings. The practical results of international exhibitions are too well known to be enlarged upon. The point wish we to make is that a local exhibition would be in no sense prejudicial to the Chicago World's Fair, for the country is large enough to make a success of two exhibitions at the same time. We should do every thing in our power to invite a foreign invasion of commercial art, if only for the purpose of displaying such attractive wares in our midst, and the fact that the World's Fair will be located in Chicago will be a potent reason for French and English cabinet and tapestry manufacturers to forego the joys of shipping their goods so far west of New York which is the International centre of civilization.

A GREAT difference is occasioned in the appearance of silver plate, according to the skill with which it has been burnished. The process of burnishing consists in rubbing it with blue stone, a far harder substance, then applying what is known as a cutting powder, to which succeeds rouge and the ball of the workman's hand. If the burnishing is unskilfully done, the surface takes a dull color or there is a black, cloudy appearance in which masses of red, termed foxy, appear. Often the plate is defective only in certain portions. It will thus be seen that dullness of hue, or nebulous, leaden-like patches, are not necessarily owing to the silver being unduly alloyed, a suspicion that such defective finishing often excites. With silver plated knives, spoons and forks, the parts most in use necessarily wear out before the rest, but no silversmith, until lately, appears to have thought of giving those parts a greater thickness of the metal. An English firm announces that it has discovered a new process to effect the result, but it appears to us that the means are sufficiently obvious, whether the plate be rolled or electrotyped. The suggestion itself is good, for with silver plating worn out at any point an article becomes unsightly. The greatest wear takes place, of course, at the extremities.